AUM

Let every Brahman with fixed attention consider all nature,
both visible and invisible, as existing in the Divine Spirit.
For when he contemplates the boundless universe in the Divine
Spirit, he cannot give his heart to iniquity.

—MANU

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 64 AUGUST, 1976 NUMBER 10

"THE MAN OF MIND"

IN "The Synthesis of Occult Science," Mr. Judge gives a meaning to the word "consciousness" which is of considerable help in understanding the human condition. He says:

> The *Manasic,* or mind principle, is cosmic and universal. It is the creator of all forms, and the basis of all law in nature. Not so with consciousness. Consciousness is a condition of the monad as the result of embodiment in matter and the dwelling in a physical form. Self-consciousness, which from the animal plane looking upward is the beginning of perfection, from the divine plane looking downward is the perfection of selfishness and the curse of separateness. It is the "world of illusion" that man has created for himself. "Maya is the perceptive faculty of every Ego which considers itself a Unit, separate from and independent of the One Infinite and Eternal Sat or 'be-ness'." The "eternal pilgrim" must therefore mount higher, and flee from the plane of self-consciousness it has struggled so hard to reach.

Here consciousness has reference to the limited states in which, at a given time, awareness is confined. By reason of its bounds, a particular field of consciousness is a state of illusion, and each cycle of human development brings the ego into contact with the relative realities of that state, and no more. Yet, at the same time, the ego is *awake* in that state, and since the ego is the triad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, with Manas, called "cosmic and universal" by Mr. Judge, its active aspect, the possibility of transcendence is always present.

What does this mean in practical terms? There seems a sense in which the mind, when able to make a part of itself independent of the limitations of a particular state of consciousness, reaches far beyond the "realities" of its embodied condition. There are scientists who, when detached from the confinements of their specialty, seem inspired by an extraordinary intuition, proposing ideas which express in principle, although in partial form, some theme of the occult philosophy. *The Secret Doctrine* is filled with quotations from such writers, used by H.P.B. to illustrate in the language of the time one or another meaning of the teachings. Yet these writers were not theosophists nor had they, with some few exceptions, any contact with the doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion. Even materialists sometimes formulate ideas which embody precisely the idea of law as a universal principle, while poets seem to have instruction denied to other men when their imagination reaches beyond all ordinary concerns in a flight of eloquence. Such individuals, H.P.B. suggests, have "a plastic power of formation," and this is a faculty of the mind or Manas. While the Maya of a state of consciousness sets certain limits of awareness, it is not all-powerful.

Among novelists H.P.B. singled out Dostoevsky and Tolstoy to illustrate the heights of insight and understanding that might be reached by those in whom the higher Manas is naturally and spontaneously active. And after an appreciative note of Tolstoy's achievements she said (in "The Cycle Moveth"):

> And yet Count Tolstoi is by no means a solitary example of the work of that mysterious cycle of psychic and spiritual evolution now in its full activity—a work which, silently and unperceived, will grind to dust the most grand and magnificent structures of materialistic speculations, and reduce to nought in a few days the intellectual work of years.

The mind, unleashed and on its own, is capable of these extraordinary expressions which are, we may think, readings or reflections of the universal processes of life and noumenal nature. They outdistance the conclusions permitted by the empirical science of the time, and far from being the result of merely rational inquiry, give to intellectuality the substance of its own subsequent development. True knowledge, in short, is within, and while it enters the sphere of literature and thought, not as knowledge but as speculation or sublime wondering, it is nonetheless evidence, whether or not recognized as such, of the higher nature

and potentialities of human beings. The explanation in Theosophic teachings for these vaulting insights is given by Mr. Judge in "Synthesis of Occult Science":

> *Mind* is the latent or active potentiality of *Cosmic Ideation,* the essence of every form, the basis of every law, the potency of every principle in the universe. Human thought is the reflection or reproduction in the realm of man's consciousness of these forms, laws, and principles. Hence man senses and apprehends nature just as nature unfolds in him. When, therefore, the Monad has passed through the form of the animal ego, involved and unfolded the human form, the higher triad of principles awakens from the sleep of ages. . . . How could man epitomize Cosmos if he did not touch it at every point and involve it in every principle? If man's being is woven in the web of destiny, his potencies and possibilities take hold of divinity as the woof and pattern of his boundless life. Why, then, should he grow weary or disheartened? Alas! why should he be degraded, this heir of all things!

Two other passages in Mr. Judge's article relate directly to what we have been considering—the spontaneous and astonishingly perceptive insights of the best writers and thinkers of the time. The authors of the ancient wisdom which we have in the works of H.P.B., he says, "have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our everyday 'sense perception'." This is the region of intuitive perception for modern man. The inherent knowledge of the Manasic principle, when embodied in the language and thought of an age, may produce such grand achievements as Leibniz' *Monadology,* to which H.P.B. devotes many pages of elaboration and correction in her major work. He was, she says, neither an Initiate nor a mystic, but a very intuitional philosopher. Yet he came very close to the hidden secrets of esoteric Theogony. His limitations belonged to the consciousness of the time in which he was born, since his theory, H.P.B. says, "soars to no loftier heights than those of the *manifested* life, self-consciousness and intelligence." (*S.D.* I, 626.) But such men as Leibniz and Spinoza nonetheless provide impressive examples of the power of mind to break out of earthly limitations, and while the world sees in the work of thinkers of this character only brilliant speculations, the student of Theosophy is able to recognize in them a display of the very process of human development. Each plane of consciousness, Mr. Judge says, is in some measure illumined by the one above it, and "the dawn of divin-

ity illumines the human plane, luring the monad to the supra-human plane of consciousness."

When H.P.B. speaks, as she does in "The Tidal Wave," of the periodic influx of spiritual inspiration that comes toward the end of each century, she has reference, we may think, to an intensification of this light from higher planes, calling out response from the awakening capacities of human beings. "What," she asked in "The Cycle Moveth," was the mysterious influence which brought about so great a change in the life of Leo Tolstoy, forcing him into a new current of expression "almost without any transition period?" But it is not only the Dostoevskys and the Tolstoys who are moved to deepening perceptions. Writing of that time in the nineteenth century, H.P.B. said:

> Thousands of men and women who belong to no church, sect, or society, who are neither Theosophists nor Spiritualists, are yet virtually members of that Silent Brotherhood the units of which often do not know each other, belonging as they do to nations far and wide apart, yet each of whom carries on his brow the mark of the mysterious Karmic seal—the seal that makes of him or her a member of the Brotherhood of the Elect of Thought. Having failed to satisfy their aspirations in their respective *orthodox* faiths, they have severed themselves from their Churches in soul when not in body, and are devoting the rest of their lives to the worship of loftier and purer ideals than any intellectual speculation can give them. How few, in comparison to their numbers, and how rarely one meets with such, and yet their name is legion, if they only chose to reveal themselves.

We might say, perhaps, that these many individuals all have a *sense* of the higher potentialities of human beings, and are acting in their lives with that sense as guide, even though they would not claim to have actual knowledge. Something besides and higher than what in their time is accounted knowledge leads them on, just as it inspires a William Blake, a Wordsworth and a Shelley, and some of the rare poetic spirits in our own time. Nor are such inspirations and callings felt only by literary figures. "Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought—Godward—he is a Theosophist; an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth with 'an inspiration of his own' to solve the universal problems."

The true course of evolution, hardly visible on the surface, is

traced by the activity and decisions of such egos, who represent the vanguard of human development. In them is growing another sense of reality, making it possible, as H.P.B. says, for the structures of materialism to fall away. It is not so much that full knowledge will be born into the world, but rather a true sense of the meaning of life will begin to take hold of the better minds, providing, in time, indications of where and how to look for further explanation. "As the authors of the *Secret Doctrine* have remarked, these doctrines may not be largely accepted by the present generation, but during the twentieth century they will become known and appreciated."

What sort of explanation might be given for the intuitive expressions that are now beginning to seem quite frequent? The doctrine of higher Manas is the basic explanation, coupled with the fact that, in the present, even the highest expressions are limited to the terms of transcendental metaphysics. (*S.D.* I, 329.) This is the law of human consciousness *in its normal state* on this plane of sense perception. In other and later cycles, there will be further possibilities. Yet what is remarkable, under existing conditions, is the richness, the philosophic integrity, and the imaginative splendor of some of the present-day work. It is as Mr. Judge says:

> But as mind is being evolved more and more as we proceed on our course along the line of the race development, there can be perceived underneath in all countries the beginning of the transition from the animal possessed of the germ of real mind to the man of mind complete.

For it was not so much by the knowledge of words that I came to the understanding of things, as by my experience of things I was enabled to follow the meansing of words.

—PLUTARCH

DEVACHAN

DREAM LIFE

Reply II

THE Appendix referred to in the *Fragments* No. VI, in the *Theosophist* for March, is in no way inconsistent. When properly understood in the light of our doctrines, App. C. (p. 136)* gives what it professes to explain and leaves nothing doubtful, while the Fragments itself has perhaps a few expressions that may be misleading: though exclusively so to those who have not paid sufficient attention to that which preceded. For instance: "Love, the creative force, has placed their (the associates') living image *before the personal soul* which craves for their presence, and that image will never fly away." It is incorrect to use the term "personal soul" in connection with the monad. "The *personal* or animal soul" is, as already said, the 5th principle, and cannot be in Devachan, the highest state permitted to it on earth being *samadhi*. It is only its *essence* that has followed the monad into Devachan, to serve it there as its ground-tone, or as the background against which its future dream-life and developments will move; its entity, or the *reliquiæ* is the "shell," the dross that remains behind as an elementary to fade away and in time disappear. That which is in Devachan is no more the *personæ*—the mask, than the smell of a rose is the flower itself. The rose decays and becomes a pinch of dust: its aroma will never die, and may be recalled and resurrected ages thence. Correctly expressed, the sentence would have to read: " . . . the living image before the *Spiritual* Soul, which being now saturated with the essence of the personality, has thus ceased to be *Arupa* (formless or rather devoid of all substance) for its Devachanic duration, and craves for their presence, etc." The gestation period is over, it has won the day, been reborn as a new out of the old ego, and before it is ushered again into a new *personality*, it will reap the effects of the causes

*Reprinted in Theosophy 2: 401.

Note.—This is the second part of the series of Replies to a critic of the sixth installment of "Fragments of Occult Truth," begun in Theosophy for July. These Replies first appeared in the *Theosophist* for August, 1883.

sown in its precedent birth in one of the Devachanic or Avitchian states, as the case may be, though the latter are found wide apart. *Avas'yam eva bhoktavyam kritam karma shubhashubam.*[1] The Devachanic condition in *all its aspects* is no doubt similar to a dreamy state *when considered from the standpoint of our present objective consciousness when we are in our waking condition.* Nevertheless, it is as real to the Devachanee himself as our waking state is to us. Therefore, when it is asked "Whether Devachan is a state corresponding to our waking life here or to OUR sleep with dreams,"—the answer given is that it is not similar to either of these conditions; but it is similar to the *dreamy condition* of a man who has no waking state at all, if such a being can be supposed to exist. A monad in Devachan has *but one state of consciousness,* and the contrast between a waking state and a dreamy state is never presented to it so long as it is in that condition. Another objection urged is, that if a Devachanee were to think of an object or person as if the object or person were present before him when they are not so (when judged from the common *ideas* of objective perception) then the Devachanee is "cheated by nature." If such is really the case, he is indeed always "cheated by nature"; and the suggestion contained in the foregoing letter as to the possible mode of communication between a Devachanee and one living on earth will not save him from delusion. Leaving aside for a moment the nature of a Devachanee's communication with another monad either in or out of Devachan, let the nature of his ideas be examined so far as they are connected with objects; and then the truth of the above mentioned statement will be easily perceived. Suppose, for instance, Galileo in Devachan, subjectively engaged in his favourite intellectual pursuit. It is natural to suppose that his telescope often comes within the range of his Devachanic consciousness, and that the Devachanee subjectively directs it towards some planet. It is quite clear that according to the general ideas of objectivity, Galileo has no telescope before him, and it cannot be contended that his train of ideas in any way actually affects the telescope which he left behind him in this world. If the objector's reasoning is correct, Galileo is "being cheated by nature," and the suggestion above referred to will in no way help him in this case.

Thus, the inference that it is neither correct nor philosophical

[1] The fruit of the tree of action, whether good or bad, must unavoidably be eaten.

to speak of a Devachanee as being "cheated by nature" becomes once more unavoidable. Such words as cheating, delusion, reality, are always relative. It is only by contrast that a particular state of consciousness can be called real or illusionary; and these words cease to have any significance whatever, when the said state of consciousness cannot be compared with any other state. Supposing one is justified in looking upon Devachanic experience as delusion from his present stand-point as a human being living on this earth, what then? We fail to see how any one means to make use of this inference. Of course from the foregoing remarks the reader is not to suppose that a Devachanee's consciousness can never affect or influence the state of consciousness of another monad either in or out of Devachan. Whether such is the case or not, the reality or the unreality of devachanic experience, so far as a Devachanee is concerned, does not depend upon any such communicative influence.

In some cases it is evident that the state of consciousness of one monad whether in Devachan or yet on earth, may blend with, as it were, and influence the ideation of another monad also in Devachan. Such will be the case where there is strong, affectionate sympathy between the two *egos* arising from participation in the same higher feelings or emotions, or from similar intellectual pursuits or spiritual aspirations. Just as the thoughts of a mesmerizer standing at a distance are communicated to his subject by the emanation of a current of magnetic energy attracted readily towards the subject, the train of ideas of a Devachanee are communicated by a current of magnetic or electric force attracted towards another Devachanee by reason of the strong sympathy existing between the two monads, especially when the said ideas relate to things which are subjectively associated with the Devachanee in question. It is not to be inferred, however, that in other cases when there is no such action or reaction, a Devachanee becomes conscious of the fact that his subjective experience is a mere delusion, for it is not so. It was already shown that the question of reality or unreality does not depend upon any such communication or transmission of intellectual energy.

We are asked, "if some of those (the Devachanee loved) are not themselves fit for Devachan, how then?" We answer: "Even in the case of a man still living on earth, or even of one suffering in Avitchi, the ideation of a monad in Devachan may still affect his

monad if there is strong sympathy between the two as indicated above.[2] Yet the Devachanee will remain ignorant of the mental suffering of the other."

If this generous provision of nature that never punishes the innocent outside this our world of delusion, be still called "a cheating of nature," and objected to, on the ground that it is not an "honest symbol" of the other personality's presence, then the most reasonable course would be to leave the occult doctrines and Devachan alone. The noble truths, the grandest goal in soul-life, will remain for ever a closed book to such minds. Devachan instead of appearing what it is—a blissful rest, a heavenly oasis during the laborious journey of the Monad toward a higher evolution, will indeed present itself as the culmination, the very essence of death itself. One has to sense intuitionally its logical necessity; to perceive in it, untaught and unguided, the outcome and perpetuation of that strictest justice absolutely consonant with the harmony of the universal law, if one would not lose time over its deep significance. We do not mean it in any unkind spirit, yet with such an opposition to the very exposition (since no one is pressed for its acceptance) of our doctrine by some western minds, we feel bound to remind our opponents that they have the freedom of choice. Among the later great world philosophies there are two,—the more modern the outgrowth of the older,—whose "after states" are clearly and plainly defined, and the acceptance of either of which, moreover, would be welcomed: one—by millions of spiritualists, the other—by the most respectable portion of humanity, viz., civilized Western society. Nothing equivocal, or like cheating of nature in the latter: her Devachanees, the faithful and the true, are plainly and charitably promised the ineffable rapture of seeing during an eternity those whom they may have loved best on earth suffering the tortures of the damned in the depths of Gehenna. We are, and do feel willing to give out some of our *facts*. Only occult philosophy and Buddhism having both failed as yet to produce a Tertullian to strike for us the key-note of an orthodox hell,[3] we cannot undertake to furnish fictions to suit every taste and fancy.

---

[2] The reader is reminded in this connection that neither Devachan nor Avitchi is a locality, but a *state* which affects directly the being in it and all others only by *reaction*.—*Ed.*

[3] Reference is probably made here to the soul-inspiring monologue that is found in Tertullian's *Despectæ*, Chapter XXX. Falling into a wild ecstasy of joy over the bare prospect of seeing some day all the philosophers "who have persecuted the name of

There is no such place of torture for the innocent, no such state in which under the plea of reward and a necessity for "honest symbols," the guileless should be made witness to, or even aware of, the sufferings of those they loved. Were it otherwise, the active bliss of the Dhyan Chohans themselves would turn into a shoreless ocean of gall at such a sight. And He who *willed*—"Let all the sins and evils flowing from the corruption of *Kaliyug,* this degenerate age of ours fall upon me, but let the world be redeemed"—would have so willed in vain, and might have given preference to the awes of the visible to those of the invisible world. To suppose that a "Soul" escaping from this evil-girdled planet where the innocent weep while the wicked rejoice, should have a like fate in store for it even within the peaceful haven of Devachan, would be the most maddening, the dreadful thought of all! But we say, it is *not* so. The bliss of a Devachanee is complete, and nature secures it even at the risk of being accused of *cheating* by the pessimists of this world unable to distinguish between *Vastu*—the one reality and *Viskaya*—the "mayas" of our senses. It is fetching rather too far the presumption that our *objective* and *subjective* shall be the true standards for the realities and unrealities of the rest of the universe; that *our* criterion of truth and honesty is to stand as the only universal land-mark of the same. Had we to proceed upon such principles, we would have to accuse nature of cheating incessantly not only her human but also her animal offspring. Who, of our objectors, when treating of facts of natural history and the phenomena of vision and colour, would ever hazard the remark that because ants are utterly unable to see and distinguish colours as human beings do, (the red, for instance, having no existence for them) therefore, are they also "cheated by nature." Neither *personality* nor *objectivity* as known to us, have any being in the conceptions of a monad; and could, by any miracle, any living human creature come within the range of the Devachanic vision, it would be as little perceived by the Devachanee as the elementals that throng the air around us are perceived with our natural eyes.

One more error of the critic. He seems to be labouring under the impression that if one has some conception of Devachanic state of subjective consciousness while in this life, he will know

---

Christ burn in a most cruel fire in hell. . . . " this saintly Patristic character, a Father of the Christian Church, exclaims: "Oh what shall be the magnitude of that scene. How I shall laugh! How I shall rejoice! How I shall triumph!" etc.—*Ed.*

that such experience is illusionary when he is actually there; and then Devachanic beatitudes will have lost all their reality so far as he is concerned. There is no reason to apprehend any such catastrophe. It is not very difficult to perceive the fallacy that underlies this argument. Suppose, for instance, A, now living at Lahore, knows that his friend B is at Calcutta. He dreams that they are both at Bombay engaged in various transactions. Does he know *at the time he is dreaming* that the whole dream is illusionary? How can the consciousness that his friend is really at Calcutta, which is only realized when he is in his waking condition, help him in ascertaining the delusive nature of his dream *when he is actually dreaming*? Even after experiencing dreams several times during his life and knowing that dreams are generally illusionary, A will not know that he is dreaming when he is actually in that condition.

Similarly, a man may experience the devachanic condition while yet alive, and call it delusion, if he pleases, when he comes back to his ordinary state of objective consciousness and compares it to the said condition. Nevertheless, he will not know that it is a dream either when he experiences it a second time (for the time being) while still living, or when he dies and goes to Devachan.

The above is sufficient to cover the case were even the state under discussion indeed "a dream" in the sense our opponents hold it in. But it is neither a "dream" nor in any way "cheating." It may be so from the stand-point of Johnson's dictionary; from that of *fact* independent of all human definition, and the standpoint of him who knows something of the laws that govern the worlds invisible, the intercourse between the monads is real, mutual, and as *actual* in the world of subjectivity, as it is in this our world of deceptive reality. It is the old story of Zöllner's man from the two-dimensional region disputing the reality of the phenomena taking place in the three-dimensional world.

letters • questions • comment

Is divinity the same as brotherhood? Divinity, it is said, must be acquired; brotherhood, though a fact in nature, is to be realized by men in a more conscious way, if they are to truly live and act as men. Everyone seems to accept the idea, but few seem to understand it well enough to practice it.

Students occasionally remark, somewhat wryly, that one of the strongest evidences for the fact of brotherhood is that it would be impossible for people to affect each other for good or ill if it were not in some sense already a reality. Because the higher consciousness sees through the lower, it could be said that the path to divinity means using all the lives we contact—mental, psychic and physical lives—in ways that refine and heighten their function, making them better and better instruments. This implies that human beings acquire divinity by raising other forms of life toward self-consciousness. Robert Crosbie suggests that we do not have to go far afield to do this, since the means are at hand and within ourselves:

> The kingly mystery of Life can not mean physical existence, which is merely one aspect of the Great Life. We have to go deeper into our own natures, and into the natures of all beings, in order to grasp what that great mystery is. . . . What is Divinity but *all-inclusive knowledge*? True spirituality is not a hazy condition. It is not something that denies any portion of the universe, nor any kind of being. A hazy abstract condition would mean no men, no principles, no opposites; but Divine spirituality is the power to know and see whatever is wished known or seen; it is an intimate knowledge of the ultimate essence of everything in nature. Such knowledge would not mean seeing all things at once, nor being everywhere at the same time, but it is *the power to see and know in any direction*. . . .

From this it would seem that divinity is basically the ability to see things as they really are—knowledge of both the limitations and the potentialities of all existence. The practice of brotherhood leads toward divinity, while the goal of divinity gives brotherhood its high and ennobling meaning. Doing all one can to create the conditions through which all beings can more fully realize their

essential nature—ultimately their divine nature—is surely the practice of brotherhood.

In "Why Races Die Out," Mr. Judge says that the opportunities afforded by incarnation in various racial environments are created, sustained, and finally destroyed by the egos connected with them. What does this variety of opportunity mean in terms of progress to the ego?

Progress, Theosophically speaking, means increase in self-knowledge. Since the world is diverse, and experience of the world is a necessity of growth, we may assume that knowledge of diversity is really a recognition of the unity behind diversity. For human beings, this is obtained by the practice of brotherhood. With this as the prevailing objective, various racial environments provide the means of understanding wider and wider ranges of diversity, including all the different kinds and degrees of intelligence connected with this planet. The crowded islands of Japan, for instance, can be seen as encouraging the development of manners and customs which serve the common good under conditions that might be regarded as very difficult by the inhabitants of sparsely settled lands. The tribal life of other races shows quite plainly the lessons of interdependence which are acquired under such conditions. In striking contrast are the challenges to conscience and moral intelligence among peoples with heightened self-consciousness, whose freedom and individualism are without the external restraints of ancient or primitive social forms. Some old cultures are ordered by traditions evolved through ages of collective experience. Others are characterized by the excitement and the pain of continual individual decision and all the resulting confusion. But the eye of spirit views the whole panorama in terms of what the Ego may learn of the laws of brotherhood, which are finally subject to no external definition, but must be grasped as principles with endlessly varying application. Mr. Judge writes suggestively on the close connection between the inner man and changing forms of his outer environment in his article, "Rings, Rounds and Obscuration":

> A race is both physical and spiritual. The physical body and brain require an informing intelligence of a degree of power sufficient to keep up the exact amount of tension demanded by that sort of body, and if this is not furnished the consequence will be that equilibrium is destroyed, followed in time by ste-

rility among the females of the race, leading inevitably to extinction.

The applications of this statement seem numerous indeed. Consider, for example, the change in focus which must take place after one has learned something new. At first the learning required full and undivided attention, but after assimilation has replaced the need for this kind of concentration on the acquisition of a skill, the attention of the learner is naturally drawn to wider fields.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF CHANGE

We have entered on the dim beginning of a new era already. It is the era of Western Occultism and of special and definite treatment and exposition of theories hitherto generally considered. We have to do as Buddha told his disciples: preach, promulgate, expound, illustrate, and make clear in detail all the great things we have learned. That is our work, and not the bringing out of surprising things about clairvoyance and other astral matters, nor the blinding of the eye of science by discoveries impossible for them but easy for the occultist. The Master's plan has not altered. He gave it out long ago. It is to make the world at large better, to prepare a right soil for the growing out of the powers of the soul, which are dangerous if they spring up in our present selfish soil. It is not the Black Lodge that tries to keep back psychic development; it is the White Lodge. The Black would fain have all the psychic powers full flower now, because in our wicked, mean, hypocritical, and money-getting people they would soon wreck the race. This idea may seem strange, but for those who will believe my unsupported word I say it is the Master's saying.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

ISIS UNVEILED

AND THE THREE OBJECTS

I To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;

II The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

III The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

AT first glance the Objects of the Theosophical Society might be assumed to be in themselves so manifestly beneficial and, negatively speaking, so entirely harmless as at once to commend them to the good-will if not to the active support of all men everywhere. To draw this conclusion, however, is unfortunately to be blind to the lessons of human history; is to be ignorant of the forces which dominate the operations of human consciousness.

Selfishness, in one or another of its countless forms, is and at all times has been the prevailing keynote of human action. Many have been the attempts to form enduring associations having for their prime object the realization of an actual nucleus of universal brotherhood among men. To unite firmly a body of men in brotherly love bent on pure altruistic work has been the dream of many high-souled men and women. Whatever of progress and amelioration has been achieved for the race from time to time has been due to such efforts. But in their durable purpose they have all failed of the great object, and humanity is today waiting as vainly as ever for the accomplishment of the most holy and most important mission that has ever commanded the devotion of the savior, the philanthropist and the martyr. Disruptive pressures from without, disintegrating forces from within, have in the end made mock and havoc of every attempt to embody practically what all men reverence as the noblest of ideals. Yet the ideal persists, though its successive incarnations wither and decay.

It cannot, then, be supposed that H. P. Blavatsky was in ig-

NOTE.—This article is a portion of Chap. IV of *The Theosophical Movement: 1875-1925*.

norance or misconception of the gigantic task she set for herself in the endeavor to create among men a Society which should have for its primary purpose the formation of a nucleus of actual Brotherhood. Nor is it to be imagined that she was indifferent to or unacquainted with the causes of all former failures in that direction. The Second and Third Objects of the Society have their real foundation in her understanding of the causes of all failures among men to achieve their heart's ideal. So long as men find occasion for frictions and antagonisms, rather than grounds for union and harmony, in what they believe and practice in the name of religion, so long will they be fundamentally at variance. So long as their ideas of knowledge—of true science—are confined to mere bodily existence, so long will all attempts at brotherhood degenerate into sordid search for material well-being, for physical and intellectual progress and development only. Faith and knowledge, instead of being natural allies, will pursue opposed courses, religion and science take mutually destructive paths, the ideal and the practical seem to be separated by an impassable gulf.

All these things are clearly, if succinctly, indicated in the Preface to the first volume of *Isis Unveiled*. Never in all her vast outpour of teaching and practical example did Madame Blavatsky place on record anything of more enduring and far-reaching worth than the propositions and implications of this Preface. After dedicating "these volumes to the Theosophical Society, which was formed in New York, A.D. 1875, to study the subjects on which they treat," her first words are an affirmation of the existence of Masters, of the Wisdom-Religion, of her own intimate acquaintance with Them and with Their philosophy:

> The work now submitted to public judgment is the fruit of a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern adepts and study of their science.

Here is implied the existence of an actual Brotherhood of living men, of perfected human beings who have become such through self-induced and self-devised exertions; herein is affirmed the perfectibility of man, the possibility of a fraternity of peace and goodwill through the means and the example afforded by acquaintance with and study of these Adepts and their science. Centuries of sectarian theological teachings that man is a poor miserable sinner, inherently imperfect and never by any possibility to be-

come perfect save through an act of faith in a vicarious Saviour; centuries of materialism in thought and action on a one-life basis —over against these deeply imbedded and dominating ideas is set, sheer and clear, the *fact of Masters;* not as some far-off, remote abstraction, some longed-for but impossible ideal, some unique and special creation of a favoring God, but veritable Divine Beings who have reached physical and mental, no less than moral and spiritual, perfection *under Law.* Here is the tremendous assurance that the realization of Brotherhood is not an impossibility to any man who will follow the path They show, by creating in and of himself the conditions precedent to the acquisition of Their knowledge and nature.

What those conditions precedent are is indicated in the succeeding sentences:

> It is offered to such as are willing to accept truth wherever it may be found, and to defend it, even looking popular prejudice straight in the face. It is an attempt to aid the student to detect the vital principles which underlie the philosophical systems of old.

All men are willing to accept truth, but each is predisposed to determine for himself the terms and conditions upon which he will base his acceptance. Each man holds, consciously or unconsciously to himself, certain fundamental ideas as to Deity, Nature and Man. He will, by consequence, accept only so much of truth as may conform to those ideas, modifying or rejecting all else. As those fundamental conceptions proceed from human ignorance and partialities, the true vital principles which *underlie* the age-old systems of thought must be detected. That cannot be for any man so long as he clings to forms of religion and philosophy which separate instead of unite mankind in the bonds of true fraternity. The Second Object, the study for comparative purposes of the various religions and philosophies, will lead to the perception of the common vital principles upon which all faiths are founded. In this comparative study the searcher for truth must emulate the plan and purpose of *Isis,* which is written "in all sincerity. It is meant to do even justice, and to speak the truth alike without malice or prejudice. But it shows neither mercy for enthroned error, nor reverence for usurped authority. Toward no form of worship, no religious faith, no scientific hypothesis has its criticism been directed in any other spirit. Men and parties,

sects and schools are but the mere ephemera of the world's day. TRUTH, high-seated upon its rock of adamant, is alone eternal and supreme." Unless the inquirer adopts and maintains the spirit of *Isis*, he cannot rid himself of prejudice, of preconception, of bias and self-interest—the real barriers to knowledge and to Brotherhood.

The Third Object runs current with the following clauses of the noble Preface:

> We believe in no Magic which transcends the scope and capacity of the human mind, nor in "miracle," whether divine or diabolical, if such imply a transgression of the laws of nature instituted from all eternity. Nevertheless, we accept the saying of the gifted author of "Festus," that the human heart has not yet fully uttered itself, and that we have never attained or even understood the extent of its powers. Is it too much to believe that man should be developing new sensibilities and a closer relation with nature? The logic of evolution must teach as much, if carried to its legitimate conclusions. If, somewhere, in the line of ascent from vegetable or ascidian to the noblest man a soul was evolved, gifted with intellectual qualities, it cannot be unreasonable to believe and infer that a faculty of perception is also growing in man, enabling him to descry facts and truths even beyond our ordinary ken.

He who would pass behind the "veil of Isis," and learn to fathom the mysteries of Nature and of Man, must boldly take his stand in advance of the science of our times and proceed to the study of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man. The quoted sentences postulate the omnipresent existence of immutable Law; do away with the idea of miraculous intervention in human or mundane affairs; affirm the inherent capacity of the mind of man for such development of its faculties as shall enable him to penetrate the arcana of being; to understand, and understanding, control the phenomena of Nature and of his own consciousness, without which true Brotherhood must forever remain a longed-for but inaccessible Utopia.

The Second and Third Objects thus constitute the ways and means by which alone the great First Object may be consummated. Viewed from the standpoint of religions which teach that enduring happiness is possible only beyond the grave, or from that of a science which inculcates that earthly existence and earthly knowledge are all that are accessible to man, all the Objects of the Theosophical Society are alike futile, because im-

possible of attainment. Considered from the basis of the ordinary man those Objects are equally useless or unsatisfactory, because they all imply and require the giving up of objects and possessions counted valuable; at best in exchange for something remote and intangible, yielding no personal or selfish benefit; at worst the loss of what one holds dear without any return but failure.

Here, then, the Preface predicates the true and enduring foundation for the seeker's faith and efforts. The philosophy of the Adepts is given:

> They showed us that by combining science with religion, the existence of God and immortality of man's spirit may be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid. For the first time we received the assurance that the Oriental philosophy has room for no other faith than an absolute and immovable faith in the omnipotence of man's own immortal self. We were taught that this omnipotence comes from the kinship of man's spirit with the Universal Soul—God! The latter, they said, can never be demonstrated but by the former. Man-spirit proves God-spirit, as the one drop of water proves a source from whence it must have come. *Ex nihilo nihil fit;* prove the soul of man by its wondrous powers—you have proved God!

Every attempt to establish a religion on the fundamental conception that man is inherently fallible and sinful, every attempt to understand Nature on the theory that man is inherently mortal and finite, must end in failure. But once the stand is taken that there is an *immortal self* in man, its limitless potentialities for knowledge and power (true religion and true science) follow; the Three Objects of H. P. Blavatsky seem no longer a vain attempt at hitching of the earthly wagon to the firmamental lights; a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood becomes the one thing to be striven for, because seen to be eternally possible and eternally desirable; the immortal is substituted for the mortal as basis and as structure, as object and as subject.

The fact of Adepts grasped, the fact of the Wisdom-Religion recognized, he only is in any real sense a Fellow of the real Theosophical Society who sets out to perform the work of clearance standing in the way of his own realization of both. By the study of the Wisdom-Religion of these Elder Brothers says H.P.B., "science, theology, every human hypothesis and conception born of imperfect knowledge, lost forever their authoritative character" in her sight. The same result must take place in the student, else the Second and Third Objects of the Society have been miscon-

strued in their purpose, will fail of their mission with him, and the First Object be as far off as ever from realization by him. Unless this position is assumed it will remain hidden from him, as she says it always has been hidden, "from those who overlooked it, derided it, or denied its existence." Encouragement is offered to prosecute the search and the effort, and the explanation made of her mission at this time in the words, "the day of domineering over men with dogmas has reached its gloaming. The drift of modern thought is palpably in the direction of liberalism in religion as well as in science. Each day brings the reactionists nearer to the point where they must surrender the despotic authority over the public conscience, which they have so long exercised and enjoyed."

Nevertheless, she well realized that all the forces of reaction, within as well as without the Society, would fight to the death against the hearing and the spread of the ideas she came to impart. So she says, prophetic at the time, facts of history now:

> To show that we do not at all conceal from ourselves the gravity of our undertaking, we may say in advance that it would not be strange if the following classes should array themselves against us:
>
> The Christians, who will see that we question the evidences of the genuineness of their faith.
>
> The scientists, who will find their pretensions placed in the same bundle with those of the Roman Catholic Church for infallibility, and, in certain particulars, the sages and philosophers of the ancient world classed higher than they.
>
> Pseudo-scientists will, of course, denounce us furiously.
>
> Broad Churchmen and Freethinkers will find that we do not accept what they do, but demand recognition of the whole truth.
>
> Men of letters and various *authorities*, who hide their real belief in deference to popular prejudices.
>
> The mercenaries and parasites of the Press, who prostitute its more than royal power, and dishonor a noble profession, will find it easy to mock at things too wonderful for them to understand; for to them the price of a paragraph is more than the value of sincerity. From many will come honest criticism; from many—cant. But we look to the future. We repeat again —we are laboring for the brighter morrow.

on the lookout

The Accomplishments of "Prophets"

In *Harper's* for June, Garry Wills writes about the importance of principled dissidents to a democratic society. Among those who have been effective for good he names Harriot Stanton Blatch, the Suffragist leader early in this century, William Lloyd Garrison, the determined opponent of slavery, and Martin Luther King. Such leaders, he points out, are deaf to the sagacious counsels of politicians who speak of the necessity for making "deals." They will not run for office. Recognizing, as Mr. Wills says, that "running for office is the worst way to bring about real change," they stick to their principles and reject all compromise. He likens such individuals to "prophets" in the Biblical sense:

> Prophets are a scandal in democracies. They are not representative. They cannot be controlled or called off by their "constituents," because no constituency sent them. They create their audience and compel it. They do not follow or submit to it. They make a claim because it is right, not because it is wanted, even by its putative beneficiaries—normally it is not wanted. . . .
>
> By the time the passage of the 1964 and 1965 civil rights bills became feasible, they were eased through with sounding oratory. But a lot of people had to die to make that oratory possible.

"Today's Common Sense"

It is important to note that such prophets do not seek power; indeed, they seek nothing for themselves. Their appeal is to the force of moral ideas and the record shows, as Mr. Wills reveals it, that they are far more influential than law-makers can ever be. The progress they achieve, moreover, is legitimate since what they accomplish rests upon changed public opinion. "Yesterday's radicalism," Mr. Wills says, "becomes today's common sense." He offers for illustration the colorful career of Anthony Benezet. In George Washington's time Benezet had the lonely role of the

prophet—but he was a prophet whose ideas were partly vindicated by national decision within a century:

> Benezet was an ugly little Quaker who conducted schools in Philadelphia. He furtively taught slaves to read at night, and cared for the sick by day. His pamphlets, more sincere than the learned, ignited the anti-slavery movement in England. His attacks on war reached kings and generals in Europe. He fought the rum trade. . . . When Quaker friends sent Patrick Henry to meet Benezet, the plantation owner was lectured on the evils of slavery. When General Howe took Philadelphia, Benezet explained to him the evils of the military life. When Philadelphia's own Quaker rulers were treating Acadian refugees with less than perfect charity, Benezet committed civil disobedience to help them out. Benjamin Rush described how he would bustle about the streets of Philadephia: "In one hand he carried a subscription paper and a Petition; in the other he carried a small pamphlet on the unlawfulness of the African Slave-Trade, and a letter to the King of Prussia upon the unlawfulness of war."

Gandhi's Example

In this century the rejection of political power as the means to social progress was dramatically exemplified by Gandhi. "Gandhiji," as Jayaprakash Narayan observed in 1956, "did not touch the ruling machinery even with a pair of tongs." And Vinoba Bhave, in some ways Gandhi's successor, had written in 1953 concerning conventional political leaders in government:

> I am sure were we to occupy the position and shoulder the responsibility which they do, we would act in much the same manner as they. Whoever occupies office and wields governmental authority must needs think in a narrow, cramped and a set circle. There can be no freedom of thinking for him. He finds himself, as it were, under an obligation to think and act as the world seems to be doing.

The Truth that Survives

A comment by Mr. Wills is in key with the Gandhian inspiration:

> The prophet armed is a terrifying thought, and men fear evil kings in the most lonely protesters. But most prophets do not want to be armed. John Brown's truth does *not* go marching on—William Lloyd Garrison's does, and Frederick Douglass's. Most prophets are made to suffer, and are willing to; but they feel obliged not to inflict suffering on their enemies. Their fidelity is to their message, whether it is heard or not. Radical reform in America has had a steady nonviolent base, symbolized

by the prominence of Quakers in almost every reform movement.

It seems at least possible that during the remaining years of this century there may be much wider recognition of the fact that, as H. P. Blavatsky said in *The Key to Theosophy,* "No lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old." She stressed the uselessness of working for political reform before effecting a reform in human nature, and gave this counsel: "Make men feel and recognise in their innermost hearts what is their real, true duty to all men, and every old abuse of power, every iniquitous law in the national policy, based on human, social or political selfishness, will disappear of itself."

Technological Space Invasion

The wide publicity given recently to Gerard O'Neill's proposal of space colonies, to be furnished by the technological resources of earth with most of the raw material—metal, glass, oxygen (locked in the soil)—coming from the moon, calls for attention. Since this Princeton physicist's plan for constructing enormous satellites, ultimately to provide room for a million inhabitants, to be located at one of the two stable gravitational points in the Earth-Moon system, has been described at length in journals such as *Physics Today, Science,* the *New York Times Magazine, Saturday Review, Harper's,* and *Smithsonian,* and since NASA has done studies of the scheme, it is beginning to be regarded by some as a serious possibility. The Spring 1976 *CoEvolution Quarterly,* a journal issued by the publishers of the *Whole Earth Catalog,* contains reactions to Mr. O'Neill's project by some forty persons, including scientists, well-known writers, and more than one poet.

No Lesson in History

Following are some of the observations of Wendell Berry, essayist, farmer, and poet:

> As a salesman, Mr. O'Neill faithfully utters every shibboleth of the cult of progress. If we will just have the good sense to spend one hundred billion dollars on a space colony, we will thereby produce more money and more jobs, raise the standard of living, help the under-developed, increase freedom and opportunity, fulfill the deeper needs of the human spirit, etc., etc. If we will surrender our money, our moral independence and our judgment to someone who obviously knows better what

is good for us than we do, then we may expect the entire result to be a net gain. Anyone who has listened to the arguments of the Army Corps of Engineers, the strip miners, the Defense Department or any club of boosters will find all this dishearteningly familiar.

The correspondence between the proposed colonization of the "high frontier" of outer space and the opening of the American frontier is irresistible to Mr. O'Neill. I find it at least as suggestive as he does, and a lot more problematical. The American prospect after, say, 1806 inspired the same sense of spatial and mental boundlessness, the same sense of limitlessness of physical resources and of human possibility, the same breathless viewing of conjectural vistas. But it is precisely here that Mr. O'Neill's sense of history fails. For the sake, perhaps, of convenience he sees himself and his American contemporaries as the inheritors of the frontier mentality, but not of the tragedy of that mentality. He does not speak as a Twentieth Century American, faced with the waste and ruin of his inheritance from the frontier. He speaks instead in the manner of a European of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, privileged to see American space and wealth as conveniently distant solutions to local problems.

Changes in Character

That is to say that, upon examination, Mr. O'Neill's doctrine of "energy without guilt" is only a renewal, in "space-age" terms, of an old chauvinism: in order to make up for deficiencies of materials on earth we will "exploit" (i.e., damage or destroy) the moon and the asteroids. This is in absolute obedience to the moral law of the frontier: humans are destructive in proportion to their supposition of abundance; if they are faced with an infinite abundance then they will become infinitely destructive. Mr. O'Neill sets it down as a false premise "That any realistic solutions to our problems of food, population, energy and materials must be based on a kind of zero-sum game, in which no resources can be obtained by one nation or group without being taken from another." That is the lesson that the closing of the earthly frontiers puts before us; it calls for an authentic series of changes in the human character and community that, if made, will afford us the spiritual resources to live both within our material needs and with each other.

Cultivation Begins at Home

Various other comments are in a similar key, such as Lewis Mumford's remark that "Such proposals are only technological disguises for infantile fantasies," and Dennis Meadows' observation: "What are needed to solve these problems on Earth are

different values and institutions—a better attitude towards equity, loss of the growth ethic, and so forth. I would rather work at the root problem here." The famous biologist, George Wald, views the idea of space colonies with horror, saying that "if we could begin to take care of life—human, animal, plant; if we cultivated rather than devastated the Earth—then it could be a great place to live on and enjoy—for the next six billion years!" There are also eight pages of closely argued technical critique of the physics and technology of O'Neill's proposals by John Holt, author of *How Children Fail*. It should be added that a number of contributors to *CoEvolution Quarterly* strongly supported the idea of space colonies.

Once an Element

Speaking before the centennial meeting of the American Chemical Society, a University of Chicago chemist, Dr. Edward Anders, said that a team of researchers has extracted from the Allende meteorite a small fraction of mineral containing the "decay products" of what appeared to be an extinct super-heavy element. (*Arizona Republic,* April 8.) While regarding the finding as preliminary to actual discovery of a once-present element, the chemist explained that this element, if it existed, would have had an atomic number near 114. He explained:

> The most straightforward interpretation of the evidence is that one of . . . three elements was present in the solar nebula 4.5 billion years ago, and condensed on primitive meteorites when temperatures fell below about 400 degrees Fahrenheit. . . . It decayed subsequently, though it is conceivable that traces have survived to this day.

Scientific speculations of this sort recall the *Secret Doctrine* statement that a great number of chemical substances and compounds "have now ceased to combine together, and are therefore unknown to the later offshoots of our Fifth Race." (I, 478.)

Is Death "the End"?

Some months ago Lookout presented the reflections about death of the research physician, Dr. Lewis Thomas, recorded in his *Lives of a Cell*. "I find myself surprised by the thought," he said, "that dying is an all-right thing to do." He discovered it to be wholly natural, prepared for, and by no means the threat to the

living that it is reputed to be. But then, he added, "there is still that permanent vanishing of consciousness to be accounted for."

> Where on earth does it go? Is it simply stopped dead in its tracks, lost in humus, wasted? Considering the tendency of nature to find uses for complex and intricate mechanisms, this seems to me unnatural. I prefer to think of it as somehow separated off at the filaments of its attachment, and then drawn like an easy breath back into the membrane of its origin, a fresh memory for a biospherical nervous system, but I have no data on the matter.

Universal Conviction

True, there are no "first-hand" data on the mode of immortality, except the teaching of the adepts, but of data concerning the human conviction that life does not end with the death of the body there is an endless supply—enough, for example, to oblige Sigmund Freud to declare that "at bottom no one believes in his own death, which amounts to saying: in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his immortality." (*Reflections on War and Death.*) There is indeed evidence of many sorts, the most impressive, perhaps, being the testimony of poets who voice their intuitions with full confidence, although in a language which must be read with an awakened imagination. An example of comparative indifference to death linked with the sense of going on is found in a brief tribute to the late L. E. Sissman, until his death last March a regular contributor to the *Atlantic*. In his "Editor's Page" in the *Atlantic* for May, the editor, Robert Manning, told of his friendship with Sissman. He asked him, when both knew that death from Hodgkin's disease was perhaps imminent for the essayist and poet, how it felt to know.

"A Curtain Rose"

> I wonder, I told Sissman [Mr. Manning writes], if I wouldn't crumple in the face of the kind of news the doctors delivered to him. "You can't possibly tell until you're confronted with it," he said. "You might find yourself surprised."
>
> "What is it like," I asked, "to stare down the gun barrel knowing that the thing's cocked and a finger is squeezing the trigger?" "I'll try to tell you," he said—and subsequently he did, in two remarkable Innocent Bystander columns that were published in *The Atlantic* in January and February 1972. . . .
>
> "Somehow my personal home demonstration of the fleeting-

ness of life redoubled my perception and enjoyment of its mutant shapes and shadows," he wrote in his first "A Little Night Music" column. "Instead of a curtain falling, a curtain rose . . ."

Flight of the Mind

> For a time the doctors thought they had cured him. . . . But then came "Dr. Hodgkin's second call" . . . He died March 10 at the age of forty-eight, leaving more friends than he knew he had and this summing up: "I have been looking down at the curvature of the earth, at the trajectory of my life and death, from a new perspective: from the perspective of a tangential line lifting, straight as a contrail, away from the earth and myself and all other things and people. It is, and has been, a lonely journey. But so, if we only knew it, is every life."

The metaphor of a contrail is not inappropriate, and the consciousness of the writer seemed carried aloft by this flight of the mind. It is as another "Freudian," Erik Erikson, has said: "And let us face it: 'Deep down' nobody in his right mind can visualize his own existence without assuming he has always lived and will live hereafter. . . ." Thus the oblique testimony of psychologists is added to the intuitive witness of poets. And already, in our time, a great many people have developed further the implications of this feeling, applying the logic spoken of by Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy*: "Unless we deny the immortality of the soul, there are no sound arguments against the doctrine of pre-existence and rebirth. . . ."

Recognition of W. Q. Judge

It was perhaps natural for the report of the Centenary Congress of the Theosophical Society held last November in New York, appearing in the *Canadian Theosophist* (January-February), to give particular attention to the restoration of Mr. Judge as one of the Founders of the Society. As one writer says: "We in the Canadian Section have always recognized William Q. Judge as a founder of the Society and as a student of Theosophy who made a special contribution to our understanding of the Ancient Wisdom." Another contributor observed:

> In the early years the Society tended to take the side of Annie Besant who had levelled certain accusations against William Q. Judge, and also to put her misinterpreted versions of Theosophical teachings in front of H.P.B. This situation still largely prevails in the Society today.

Under these circumstances it is interesting to report that . . . John Coats, the International President of the Society, made the dramatic remark that perhaps Mrs. Besant could have been wrong. Such an admission bears great significance.

Theosophy Versus "Junk"!

A criticism offered regarding the "book exposition" of the Congress is of interest to those who feel that primary attention should be given to the writings of the Founders. In his report, the General Secretary of the T.S. in Canada said:

On the negative side, the exposition highlighted the enormous collection of material put out through T.P.H. [Theosophical Publishing Houses—of Wheaton, London, and Adyar] which does it no credit whatever. I can sympathize with the delegate who observed, "What a load of junk!" That some of these books should be graced by association with original Theosophical literature is dreadful. It can only result in a large segment of the intelligent public being turned off the better books in the T.P.H.

Is Theosophy a Body of Knowledge?

A paper prepared by Geoffrey Farthing for use by a discussion group at the Congress, titled "The Relation of Theosophy to the Theosophical Society," also printed in the January-February *Canadian Theosophist,* seems to embody a related attitude, raising pointed questions such as—

If Theosophy is, and can only be, a matter of opinion, how far is it better than or different from the belief or faith of the religionist?

Can we not assume that our Masters *know* what they tell us about, from first hand? If so, then cannot Theosophy be taken as facts in nature,—discoverable, knowable facts, when we have the faculties working to apprehend them?

Would we not then have something specific to disseminate? If we can agree that we have, does it not behoove every member who would speak and write in the name of Theosophy to know what the Masters told of it?

Obligation of Theosophical Students

If there are teachings at variance with what the Masters gave us, and there are, as for example, traversing the planes of being, in consciousness, after death, do we not have to decide whether we will believe the Masters with their teaching on

> the matter (consistent with the whole grand scheme), or the psychic or spiritualistic view at variance with the teaching and which does not fit with the grand scheme? Both views cannot be right. We have to choose. As members of the Society, have we not a responsibility to put the theosophical view?
>
> N.B.: It is important to note here that we are under no compulsion to abandon our own beliefs, whether they accord with Theosophy or not. But surely we should give out our differing views as our opinion (not as Theosophy) and make it clear we are doing so.

Such questions and proposals seem filled with common sense in relation to the responsibility of Theosophists to transmit Theosophy as it was originally recorded. Mr. Farthing, it may be noticed, is chairman and one of the founding trustees of the Blavatsky Trust, formed recently in England to publish and promote the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and such teachings of the Masters as are available. Associated with him in this venture are Christmas Humphreys and Graham Nicholas.

Alterations in Attitude

In his column, "The Despairing Optimist," in the Spring *American Scholar,* René Dubos writes broadly about the change in temper and attitude now going on. He begins by recalling the long years of enthusiasm for industrial progress, so notable in the United States, pointing out that the disasters brought by pollution, shortages, and environmental degradation caught the world "by surprise," leading, little by little, to a change in attitude on the part of many people. While attempts at control of technology are, as Dr. Dubos says, "clumsy and difficult," he points to several measures such as the banning of certain pesticides and the shelving of plans to construct an American supersonic transport as examples. But more important, he thinks, is the apparent reversal of public opinion concerning the benefits of unlimited technological advance:

> The social attitude toward innovations can undergo rapid changes even while these innovations are still in the stage of scientific or cultural development. Witness the heated controversies and progressive evolution of views about genetic engineering and behavioral control, despite the paucity of evidence that effective techniques will soon—if ever—be developed for the manipulation of genes or of behavior on a population scale.

A Different Ideal

The question of how genuine human good is served now comes to the fore:

> Perhaps the most interesting in the long run are the indications of reversal of attitudes concerning the role of human beings in various technologies. Up to now, one of the explicit ideals of technological civilization has been to substitute machines for human beings wherever possible. At first, this policy had the advantage of increasing industrial productivity; then, progressively, machines proved more efficient that human beings in most industrial operations. It is now becoming apparent, however, that the unreasonable use of Western technology often creates conditions that are inimical to the expression of human resourcefulness and creativity. Gandhi's saying that the future of India is not in mass production but in production by the masses may have meaning for the Western world as well. The human tragedies resulting from unemployment may lead industrial societies to rediscover that, except for the dullest, most repetitive, and painful tasks, human beings are better than machines—and certainly more creative.

Self-Determining Man

It is of interest that Dr. Dubos—who wrote *The Mirage of Health*—in his latest book, a study of man titled *Beast or Angel?* (Scribner, 1974), makes Pico della Mirandola's Oration on the Dignity of Man the keynote of his conception of human possibility. After quoting from Pico the passage on how the human being determines his own destiny—how, indeed, by his own action he either grows brutish or is reborn "into the higher forms, which are divine"—Dr. Dubos proposes that the history of all civilization is here described in principle. He concludes his *American Scholar* essay on the same note:

> Animals are almost completely prisoners of biological evolution, but human beings are blessed with the freedom and inventiveness of social evolution. They can retrace their steps and start on a new course whenever they see danger ahead; they can integrate the raw materials of earth, with the knowledge derived from past experience and from new learning, in a continuous evolutionary process of creation.

Decline of Architecture

According to the *Toronto Globe & Mail,* Prof. Henry Elder, retiring director of British Columbia's School of Architecture,

came to Toronto recently to tell an audience of architects that their profession has no future in a society "that is itself well on the way to being replaced." The movement sometimes called "alternative culture," he said, which began with the youth movements of the 60s, "is now characterized by successive waves of 'radical invasions,' of professional activities," and "will eventually overtake and replace existing institutions." The Toronto newspaper summarizes:

> Mr. Elder said the increasingly self-protective role of the professions is an early indication of their eventual decline and fall. He said medicine and education were two of the professions to succumb first to an "invasion by science" and they are now rigidly embedded in scientific systems.
>
> Their role is defensive, as the roles of government and business are becoming defensive, and they will be pushed aside if they fail to adapt. The new demands are for preventive rather than curative medicine, and for non-specific education, emphasizing the humanities.

New Method and Values

The fundamental point of this teacher of architecture is that changes in basic human outlook inevitably shape the institutions that give society its form:

> "The professions do not create civilization," he said. "They are created by civilization as it defines its goals, principles and ethics. Law, medicine, and religion can be described as the virtuous professions, and we like to think of architecture as one of these, although it has failed to provide society with the virtues it promised.
>
> "These professions have invited science to take part and they are being taken over by it. The precedents were the takeover of the arts and crafts professions by education and the takeover of the problem-solving professions by technology."

But the sort of problem-solving that evolved from industry does not suit the human needs of the present. Actually, the habitual approach to problems seems hardly aware of true human needs. Mr. Elder believes that this sort of thinking, developed from the industrial revolution, will soon be abandoned in favor of what he calls "contextual thinking and flexible attitudes to the waves of change already in motion." The *Globe & Mail* report continues:

> Industrial thinking, as he defines it, is the system of problem-solving logic [which] defines problems narrowly, in terms of the

special interests of the group involved. "The new method imposes a different set of values on the problem itself, by studying it in terms of the wider environmental, social or economic context."

Evidence of Cyclic Change

While not many professional men express themselves as forcefully as Prof. Elder, there are other voices which say substantially the same thing. The spirit of change is in the air, and often persons who have spent their lives in design in relation to human activities and occupations are able to recognize more clearly than others the blindness evident in the customary ways of doing things, and to point to the symptoms of radical change that are beginning to appear throughout present-day society. People, Prof. Elder says, are becoming more concerned with doing useful and fulfilling work than with how much money they make, while at the same time there is, he adds, a "general 'grass-roots' movement to protect the environment from exploitation by governments and the private sector." A reading of H.P.B.'s articles, "The Tidal Wave" and "The Cycle Moveth," will provide a context of the teaching of cyclic law for these growing tendencies of the times. There is a sense in which they have barely begun. Ten years from now, their philosophical and moral underpinnings will probably begin to be plain to all.